

LISTING OF CLAIMS

Claim 1. (Original) A method for controlling the delivery of notifications comprising:
receiving a notification from a first notification sender; and
in response to receiving the notification, controlling the delivery of the
notification in accordance with one or more user contexts that have been set by one or
more context setters.

Claim 2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a user context comprises a condition
that may be in first or second states, and an instruction that is to be followed if the
condition is in the first state.

Claim 3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the condition of at least one of the
user contexts relates to whether or not the user is at least partially visually occupied, and
the associated instruction restricts the delivery of notifications in terms of their visual
display.

Claim 4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the condition of at least one of the
user contexts relates to whether or not the user is at least partially occupied by sound, and
the associated instruction restricts the delivery of notifications in terms of their volume.

Claim 5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein a plurality of user contexts that are
associated with a specified user are set by a plurality of context setters.

Claim 6. (Currently amended) A method for setting a user context comprising:

receiving at least one user context from at least one context setter; and
in response to receiving the at least one user context, setting the user context such that the delivery of incoming notifications for the user from a plurality of sources will be controlled according to the user context.

Claim 7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein a user context comprises a condition that may be in first or second states, and an instruction that is to be followed if the condition is in the first state.

Claim 8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the condition of at least one user context relates to whether or not the user is at least partially visually occupied, and the associated instruction restricts the delivery of notifications in terms of their visual display.

Claim 9. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the condition of at least one user context relates to whether or not the user is at least partially occupied by sound, and the associated instruction restricts the delivery of notifications in terms of their volume.

Claim 10. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the condition of at least one user context relates to whether or not the user is unavailable for receiving notifications of any kind, and the associated instruction restricts the delivery of notifications altogether.

Claim 11. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein at least one of the context setters is an operating system.

Claim 12. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein at least one of the context setters is a program other than an operating system.

Claim 13. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein a set of rules are defined by a user to dictate how notifications that contain at least a first specified element should be delivered.

Claim 14. (Original) One or more computer-readable media for enabling a notification sending computer-program segment to communicate with one or more other computer-program segments, said media comprising:

a set of computer-usable instructions that cause a request to deliver a notification for a user from a notification sending computer-program segment to be communicated to one or more other computer-program segments capable of executing said request, wherein the delivery of the notification is controlled in accordance with one or more user contexts.

Claim 15. (Original) The media of claim 14, wherein a user context comprises a condition that may be in first or second states, and an instruction that is to be followed if the condition is in the first state.

Claim 16. (Currently amended) The media of claim 14, wherein the instruction of the user context ~~may indicate~~ indicates that selected notifications should be at least one of routed, denied, deferred, or delivered.

Claim 17. (Currently amended) The media of claim 14, wherein the instruction of the user context ~~may indicate~~ indicates that selected notifications should be restricted in terms of their visual display.

Claim 18. (Original) The media of claim 14, wherein a plurality of user contexts that are associated with a specified user are set by a plurality of context setters.

Claim 19. (Currently amended) The media of claim 14, further comprising rules that dictate how notifications that contain at least a first specified element should be delivered, and which ~~may provide~~ provides exceptions to the instructions of the user contexts.

Claims 20-26. (Canceled)

Claim 27. (Currently amended) A method of communicating between a plurality of notification senders and a notification processing system comprising:

the plurality of notification senders issue calls for sending notifications to a user;
and

the notification processing system receives the calls and processes the notifications in accordance with one or more user contexts, wherein at least one of said one or more user contexts identifies a plurality of conditions, each condition having a plurality of states, and an instruction to be followed for each state of said conditions.

Claim 28. (Canceled)

Claim 29. (Currently amended) The method of claim 27, wherein ~~the condition of at least one user context~~ one of said conditions relates to whether or not the user is at least partially visually occupied, and the associated instruction restricts the delivery of notifications in terms of their visual display.

Claim 30. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the condition of at least one user context relates to whether or not the user is at least partially occupied by sound, and the associated instruction restricts the delivery of notifications in terms of their volume.

Claim 31. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein the condition of at least one user context relates to whether or not the user is unavailable for receiving notifications of any kind, and the associated instruction restricts the delivery of notifications altogether.

Claim 32. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein a plurality of user contexts that are associated with a specified user are set by a plurality of different context setters.

Claim 33. (Currently amended) A method of communicating between a context setter and a notification processing system comprising:

the context setter issues a call for setting a user context identifying a state of a user's visual or aural occupation; and

the notification processing system receives the call and sets the user context so that future notifications are processed in accordance with the user's visual or aural occupation.

Claim 34. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, further comprising the step of receiving a request for a notification having both visual and audio components, and restricting one of said visual and audio components from said notification based on said user context ~~wherein a user context comprises a condition that may be in first or second states, and an instruction that is to be followed if the condition is in the first state.~~

Claim 35. (Currently amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the ~~instruction of the~~ user context ~~may indicate~~ indicates that selected notifications should be at least one of routed, denied, deferred, or delivered.

Claim 36. (New) One or more computer-readable media storing computer-executable instructions for performing the following steps:

establishing a plurality of user-defined conditional rules for handling incoming notifications, said rules identifying a state of computer system resources and one or more permissible notification actions based on said state of computer system resources;

providing a plurality of application program interfaces for requesting notifications to a computer user, wherein a first of said interfaces is offered as part of a system shell and results in a notification to said user in response to being called, and wherein a call using a second one of said interfaces does not result in a notification to said user in response to said call, but results in a response identifying a context of said user; and

in response to a call made using said first interface, applying one or more of said rules to provide a notification to said user.

Claim 37. (New) The one or more computer-readable media of claim 36, wherein said state of computer system resources identified by one or more of said rules reflects an amount of a computer system display's screen that is available.

Claim 38. (New) The one or more computer-readable media of claim 37, further comprising instructions to withhold a video portion of an incoming notification when said computer display is operating in full-screen mode.

Claim 39. (New) The one or more computer-readable media of claim 36, wherein said state of computer system resources identified by one or more of said rules reflects whether audio resources of the computer system are in use.

Claim 40. (New) The one or more computer-readable media of claim 39, further comprising instructions to withhold an audio portion of an incoming notification when said audio resources are in use.

Claim 41. (New) The one or more computer-readable media of claim 40, further comprising instructions to permit a video portion of said incoming notification when said audio resources are in use.

Claim 42. (New) The one or more computer-readable media of claim 39, further comprising instructions to adjust a volume of an audio portion of said incoming notification when said audio resources are in use.